



State of Arizona
Department of Education

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MEMORANDUM

TO: All Sponsors of the National School Lunch Program

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DATE: August 1, 2011

SUBJECT: Child Nutrition Reauthorization 2010: Local School Wellness Policies

This memorandum is to provide information on the new requirements for local wellness policies. Local educational agencies (LEAs) are highly encouraged to begin reviewing their policies for the coming School Year 2011-2012, and begin moving forward on implementing the new requirements. Local wellness policies are an important tool for parents, LEAs and school districts to promote student wellness, prevent and reduce childhood obesity, and provide assurance that school meal nutrition guidelines meet the minimum federal school meal standards.

Section 204 of the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 (the Act) strengthens wellness policies by emphasizing ongoing implementation and assessment. This provision also supports a robust process at the community level, including the expansion of the School Health Advisory Council (SHAC) participating in the wellness policy development to include more members from the community. This approach is intended to foster broad-based community support for the development and implementation of effective wellness policies. The Act retains the requirement that each LEA participating in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and/or School Breakfast Program (SBP) establish, for all schools under its jurisdiction, a local school wellness policy.

Elements of the Local Wellness Policy

As was previously required, local wellness policies must include, at a minimum, goals for nutrition education, physical activity, and other school-based activities that promote student wellness, as well as nutrition guidelines to promote student health and reduce childhood obesity. The Act added the requirement that local wellness policies include goals for nutrition promotion.

Local Discretion

As previously required, LEAs can determine the specific policies appropriate for the schools under their jurisdiction, provided that those policies address all of the required elements specified in the Act.

Public Involvement

LEAs are now directed to include teachers of physical education and school health professionals, as well as parents, students, representatives of the school food authority, school board members, school administrators, and community members, (i.e. School Health Advisory Council, SHAC), to participate in the development of wellness policies. The Act also expanded the purpose of the SHAC beyond the development of a local wellness policy to include the implementation of the local wellness policy with periodic review and updates.

Implementation, Periodic Assessment, and Public Updates

The Act requires LEAs to inform and update the public (including parents, students, and others in the community) about the content and implementation of the local wellness policies. LEAs are also required to measure periodically and make available to the public an assessment of the local wellness policy, including:

- The extent to which schools are in compliance with the local wellness policy;
- The progress made in attaining the goals of the local wellness policy.

Finally, the Act requires LEAs to designate one or more LEA officials or school officials, as appropriate, to ensure that each school/site complies with the local school wellness policy.

Recommended Actions for School Year 2011-2012

Section 204 of the Act was effective as of October 1, 2010. Therefore, the Arizona Department of Education (ADE) will ensure that LEAs are aware of the changes and begin reviewing their local wellness policies during School Year 2011-2012 and, to the extent practicable, begin moving forward on implementing the new requirements.

LEAs may find it helpful to consult the local wellness policy reference materials and sample policies on the Food and Nutrition Services (FNS) website at:

<http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/healthy/wellnesspolicy.html> and on our ADE website at: <https://www.azed.gov/health-safety/cnp/nslp/Operating/Wellness/>. FNS and ADE will be updating these materials to reflect the new requirements. There are a number of ways in which LEAs can implement the requirement for informing and updating the public about the content and implementation of the local wellness policies. Acceptable methods may include developing or disseminating printed or electronic materials to families of school children and other members

of the school community at the beginning of the school year, and posting the local wellness policies and an assessment of its implementation on the district or school website. The information must be made available to the public by LEAs in an accessible, easily understood manner. For School Year 2011-2012, LEAs should be working toward developing a reasonable method to implement this requirement, with the goal of making the information public by the end of the school year.

Technical Assistance

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has a number of resources to assist LEAs in designing, implementing, and promoting elements of local wellness policies, which are available on the CDC website: <http://www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth>. In addition, CDC will soon be releasing the *School Health Guidelines to Promote Healthy Eating and Physical Activity Among Youth*, which presents evidence-based guidance for schools on how to promote healthy eating and physical activity in schools. The guidelines serve as the foundation for developing, implementing, and evaluating school-based healthy eating and physical activity policies and practices for K-12th grade students. LEAs should refer to these resources and our ADE websites: <https://www.azed.gov/health-safety/cnp/nslp/Operating/Wellness/> and www.healthologyaz.com to assist them in adding additional elements to their existing local wellness policies.

Implementation Oversight and Proposed Rule

The Arizona Department of Education (ADE) will continue to ensure local wellness policies are in place when conducting administrative reviews. As needed, ADE will offer technical assistance to LEAs to assist in identifying practical means of implementing the new requirements.

For questions regarding this memo, please contact your School Nutrition Programs Specialist at (602) 542-8700.

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